

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. Applicant respectfully requests that the foregoing amendments be entered at least because they raise no new issue requiring further search or consideration.

Claim 1 and 8 are currently being amended. No new matter is added.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-9 and 11 are now pending in this application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 7 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicants alleged admission of prior art (“APA”) in view of the “1964 Proceedings of . . .” (“1964 Proceedings”) or “Small and Medium . . .” (“Small and Medium”). Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,715,270 to Jackson (“Jackson”). Claims 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,687,625 to Hasegawa et al. (“Hasegawa”). Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,149,492 to Arai et al. (“Arai”). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a reactor containment vessel of a boiling water reactor configured to contain a reactor pressure vessel. The reactor containment vessel comprises an upper drywell including: “a first side and a second side which is opposite to the first side, the first side having an inner surface, the second side having an inner surface”, and “wherein the distance between an outer surface of the reactor pressure vessel and the inner surface of the first side is longer than a distance between the outer surface and the inner

surface on the second side.” Thus, in claim 1 the reactor containment vessel is configured such that the reactor pressure vessel is arranged off-center in the reactor containment vessel. In contrast to claim 1, the APA discloses a reactor containment vessel which is coaxial with its contained reactor pressure vessel. Moreover, 1964 Proceedings and Small and Medium would not suggest to one skilled in the art modifying the system of the APA to arrive at that as claimed in claim 1.

The APA discloses a suppression pool 12 of annular shape horizontally surrounding the reactor pressure vessel 1. The suppression pool is disposed under an upper drywell 3, where the wall of the suppression pool is continuous to the inner surface of the upper drywell. For such a configuration, it is natural that the containment vessel be coaxial with the reactor pressure vessel, and the APA discloses such a containment vessel to be coaxial in Figures 5 and 6.

Neither 1964 Proceedings nor Small and Medium would suggest to one skilled in the art modifying the system of the APA, where an annular shaped suppression pool is disposed under an upper drywell, and where the wall of the of the suppression pool is continuous to the inner surface of the upper drywell, so that the reactor pressure vessel is arranged off-center in the reactor containment vessel.

Neither 1964 Proceedings nor Small and Medium suggest the features of claim 1 in the context of a boiling water reactor of (1) “the reactor pressure vessel being directly connected to at least one main steam pipe” which penetrates the reactor containment vessel, (2) “a suppression pool of annular shape horizontally surrounding the reactor pressure vessel”, and (3) “the suppression pool being disposed under the upper drywell, the suppression pool having a wall which is continuous to the inner surface of the upper drywell.”

While 1964 Proceeding and Small and Medium may disclose a reactor pressure vessel which is off center the reactor containment vessel for some types of reactors, these references do not suggest such an arrangement in the context of features (1) - (3). Applicant submits that in the context of features (1) –(3) and the APA, it would have been natural to one skilled in the art to have arranged the reactor pressure vessel coaxial with a cylindrical reactor

containment vessel as shown in Figures 5 and 6, not arranged off-center in the reactor containment vessel. Thus, when the invention of claim 1 is considered as a whole, as must properly be done under an analysis under section 103, claim 1 is not obvious.

Jackson, Hasegawa and Arai fail to cure the deficiencies of the APA and 1964 Proceedings and Small and Medium.

Claims 2-9 and 11 ultimately depend from claim 1, and are patentable for at least the same reasons as well as for further patentable features recited therein.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

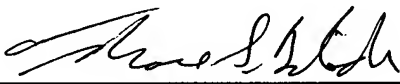
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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